

	DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE National Institute of Standards and Technology National Voluntary Laboratory Accreditation Program	<b>ISSUE DATE:</b> May 25, 1999
	<b>LAB BULLETIN</b>	<b>NUMBER:</b> LB-3-1999
<b>SUBJECT:</b> Recording of Bulk Asbestos Analysis Data		

It has been reported that some of the NVLAP Bulk Asbestos Analysis laboratories are using a "default" system for recording the optical measurements performed on fibers detected in bulk building materials. A "default" system is a computerized system whereby an analyst enters his or her best guess as to the asbestos type a fiber may be and the computer then enters all the required optical data, without the analyst ever performing the optical measurements. NVLAP assessors are told that the analyst then performs the optical measurements and edits the screen if his or her data is different than the default values the computer has entered.

The defaulting of optical data does not meet the NVLAP requirements found in the NVLAP Bulk Asbestos Specific Operations Checklist, Item 9.3.2. This item reads: "The laboratory records the following data for the asbestos type(s) **by PLM examination**:", and then goes on to list eight items that must be recorded. In order to meet this requirement, laboratories must be able to document that they are actually gathering the required data by PLM examination and not by guesswork.

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